

Stephen S. Rosenfeld

## Who Needs a Speech?

An odd notion of Ronald Reagan, the Great Non-Communist, has taken root—shallowly, one trusts—under the very roof of the White House. There one can hear the admonition, accompanied by sighs and shakes of the head, that President Reagan has indeed and unfortunately failed to spell out his foreign policy goals, and that he needs to make a major address to accomplish that job.

Hard on the heels of this confession comes the rather defensive-sounding explanation that the president does, of course, have good reason for having left a gap—to get the major parts of his economic plan out of the way first.

Talk about confusion of form and substance. One can forgive the town's once and future speech writers for suggesting that the process of preparing a Major Foreign Policy Speech, in which a president generalizes the basic themes for his aides to elaborate, refine and thrash out, is itself electric and statesmanly, virtually the crowning exercise of presidential leadership. But how can savvy aides close to Reagan be indulging in this fashion?

Say what you will about the Reagan foreign policy, it seems to me irresponsible to say that we don't know what his goals are. What do we know better? When has a president ever communicated more clearly—from where it counts: the heart, the hip—where he wants to go in the world? Just who is in charge? We may have known more about Ronald Reagan's international ambitions before his presidency began than we knew about Jimmy Carter's when his presidency ended.

Actually, to know Reagan's policy we do not have to rely entirely on the signals he has been sending for the last 15 or so years—as constant, consistent and reliable as these have been. In his nearly five months in the White House, his administration has taken numerous specific steps around the world. We do not know all the particular steps he will take from here on in and how they will match up with each other. But Don Oberdorfer of The Post connected the dots the other day and came up with "an secretion of tactical decisions [adding] up to a policy, if not a grand strategy." Quite so.

Some people complain, or allege, that the administration is still groping for a grand design, or is still groping for lack of one, but that is the last complaint I would make. My complaint is that Reagan has a grand design, one he shaped and formed in his years in the wilderness, and that he is not so much testing it against reality as he is imposing it piece by piece as he goes, without taking due care to see if it fits. Events have forced him to take some detours—the grain embargo—but the design seems so long operative for that.

In the circumstances, the possible advantage can there be for Reagan to let it all hang out in a big foreign policy speech? He already knows where he's going, as do the aides he shows the most confidence in. Those in the bureaucracies and the embassies who don't know have little to be afraid of. Precisely because Reagan has a design in his head, he has a special need for tactical flexibility, and he serves it up to himself by not saying everything at once.

Even those of us who are wary of his design can be pleased that he unfolds it slowly and gradually. That gives events and contrary arguments a chance, whatever it may be, to make their pragmatic mark.

As for Reagan's determination to keep foreign policy from distracting the administration's and the country's attention from the economy, he is completely right. One does not have to share his confidence in his economic plans in order to believe that 1) he has reason to establish his credibility by holding to his repeated pledges to make revival of the economy his first domestic and foreign priority, and 2) he can accomplish what is important and lasting in foreign policy unless he makes headway in his mission of economic recovery.

That goes whether you think that he deserves a chance to show his economic program will work, or whether you believe that his program, since it's going to be largely passive anyway, needs to be seen to fail so that something more promising can be tried.

Reagan's situation recalls Eisenhower, another president who enjoyed substantial public confidence even before he was elected and started articulating policy. We know better now than then that he nursed his popularity and his reputation by musing. This would seem to be a good model for Reagan.

William Raspberry

## Formula for Stupidity

Nothing the Reagan administration is likely to do can defy rational explanation quite so much as the recent vote on the Third World sale of infant formula.

Technically, morally, politically and practically, it still seems a stupid decision.

For months the argument had been made, by officials of the World Health Organization and the U.S. government as well as by commentators here and abroad, that the use of the mother's milk substitutes was dangerous to Third World babies because the water used to dilute them was so often contaminated.

Many of those who urged for a ban on the sale, or at least a significant curtailment of the advertising, of the formula in developing nations charged the manufacturers with an effort to make it seem "Western" or "progressive" for mothers not to breast-feed their children.

That might or might not have been the case. As representatives of some of the manufacturers noted, some mothers are physically incapable of breast-feeding. It was not merely good business but good health to make the substitutes available, they contended. They also tried to isolate the problem of contaminated water from the sale of the formula, noting that the formula would not prevent the illnesses that come from the use of the same water for drinking, or for preparing the rice water frequently given to young children.

In addition, they claimed that all they wanted was to give mothers a choice, not unduly to influence that choice.

Those who argued for the WHO view countered that breast-feeding should be especially encouraged in the Third World. The natural filter-

ing of mother's milk through the mother's own body, they said, tends to remove dangerous contaminants. Furthermore, breast-fed babies tend to absorb their mothers' natural immunities to the contaminants.

If that were all there was to the matter, the U.S. position might at least have been defensible. There was more.

Long before the May 21 vote, it was clear that the public perception of the issue was of infant lives versus corporate profits. That perception, even if false, might have given American officials pause.

Even worse, however, it had become clear that the WHO position would prevail. That being the case, it is hard to see what the United States had to gain from the vote.

Why didn't Reagan at least order the U.S. representative to abstain in the voting?

Some critics, even while blaming the U.S. position, tried to spare the president. Reagan's aides, they said, had kept him from getting the full story of what was at issue. As Rep. Tom Harkin (D-Iowa) put it, "I don't believe that Ronald Reagan wanted to see babies die."

Even Eugene Babbs, one of two officials of the U.S. Agency for International Development (AID) who resigned in protest of the U.S. vote, seemed to share that view. It was "difficult to believe that the president had not been told all the information Mr. Reagan would have made this decision," Babbs told the audience of the Mutual Broadcasting System's Reporter's Roundup.

Perhaps, but the excuse of ignorance was weakened considerably when, two days before the vote, the White House, pleading a busy schedule,

blowp occurred when The Mainichi, a leading Japanese newspaper, published as sensationally as possible a statement by me that the American understanding of the agreement that there would be no "introduction into Japan" of nuclear weapons without prior consultation with the Japanese government did not include American ships making port calls or in transit through Japanese waters. The Mainichi failed to make clear that this comment had been made in passing in a broad background type of interview, given before the outbreak of the word "alliance" and when everything seemed tranquil in Japanese-American relations. Nor did the paper or other news media that took up the cry make it clear that this so-called revelation had been made before being argued over by the Japanese public and then been dropped as a matter of common sense.

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It may have seemed convenient to the Japanese government to bridge the gap by adhering to the old double formula in which the American side neither affirmed nor denied the presence of nuclear weapons anywhere and the Japanese simply said that they trusted the United States. But inside as these two statements covered over a deception, they are unworthy of the sort of relationship that has developed between Japan and the United States, and impair the growth of full trust and between.

America and Japan, because of their wealth of contacts, will always share a full plate of

"It is obviously impossible for American ships, which constitute a large part of the defense of Japan, to change their armaments each time they enter Japanese waters."

problems. One major and continuing problem will be over trade matters, as we grow toward a system maximizing free trade and minimizing political friction resulting from rapid increases of imports in sensitive areas of the economy. Japan's recent acceptance of voluntary restrictions on automobile exports is a case in point. Another problem is the recurrent American wish to have the Japanese speed up their defense buildup. On this, the American efforts usually seem only to irritate the Japanese and cause them anxiety. It is probably wise to let Japan follow its own political instincts in what has proved to be a slow, but steady and significant increase in defense capabilities.

In addition, of course, there will always be smaller, accidental friction between the two countries, as in the recent sinking of a Japanese cargo vessel by an American submarine and the cutting of Japanese fish nets by American ships on maneuvers with Japanese naval vessels. It was unfortunate that dred irritation over voluntary controls on cars and anxieties over American

don its three nuclear principles of not making, possessing or introducing nuclear weapons. A clear and realistic understanding of what constitutes introduction will preserve all three fully and not degrade them to two and a half principles, as some Japanese maintain.

What will be the outcome of this present brookhina in Japanese politics and Japanese-American relations? It will probably die down, as similar incidents have before, leaving Japanese politics and Japanese-American relations little changed. Beyond that, it might help clear the atmosphere and cleanse Japanese-American relations of unrealistic hopes and petty deceptions. The partnership is just too important to both countries to be allowed to be sullied in this way. Finally, it may help American and Japanese realize again that theirs is a relationship that needs careful attention and work. There is a big gap in cultural background, psychology, geography and historical experience between the two countries. We cannot afford to take each other for granted.

Tom Braden

A Father and Sen. Helms

Monument grounds and entered a side street, a car rolled up next to the sidewalk. Three men emerged from it, seized her roughly and, before she could do more than utter a half-stifled cry, put her into the back seat where two more men held her to the floor.

She was left, gagged and taken to a house, the location of which she could not remember. She was kept in the house for the rest of the night during which time she was repeatedly raped.

The next morning she was blindfolded, driven back to the Monument grounds and was a question of minutes from being executed by a firing squad. She was released, however, after a hard case against her because to do so would mean running headlong into the pro-settlements fired up by four years of Begin-Sharon success in planning for new settlements.

This reluctance tends to reinforce the Begin-Sharon policy, creating conditions for a future clash with the United States. Reagan's role in his visit U.S. Arab coalition against the Soviet.

Beyond that, Begin's failure to place the settlements issue from within the context of the broader tragedy of the Jewish people, and his unwillingness to come to grips with the central concern of his future security.

Now this was not a question of cutting the budget. Abortion costs for poor women who are raped do not amount to a large sum. Rather it was a question of moral principle. Sen. Jesse Helms of North Carolina, and the Moral Majority, which follows him around, are convinced that abortion is murder. The woman who wants one wants it because she has been raped.

I don't think it will be very long before Jesse and his friends are going to come after the unborn.

In this instance, I am not very comfortable about being unpur. I object to what the Senate committee did. But I have the human instinct to object even more strenuously when I reason that, by the same standard with which the Senate committee dealt with the poor, they will shortly deal with me.

So let me tell you my story.

A few days ago, I took my daughters to attend an enormous Fourth of July celebration at the Washington Monument. It was a free show with fireworks and flags and entertainment, and, according to the newspaper account, the large crowd behaved well.

But as my daughter strolled alone off the



1981 Dark-helmeted Japanese police struggle to control anti-nuclear demonstrators, wearing white helmets, in Sasebo, Japan, during a protest against the presence of a U.S. atomic submarine.

Edwin O. Reischauer

## Japan: The Meaning of the Flap

We have become accustomed to seeing Japan as the best organized, smoothest functioning industrial machine in the world, with a law-abiding, contented and affluent people and an extraordinarily stable democratic political system. That there is more to the picture has become all too clear in the past few weeks. Some of the sensitivities and instabilities of the early post-war years still remain. This was first shown in the political uproar over the use of the word "alliance" in a communiqué issued at the time of Prime Minister Suzuki's visit to Washington in early May. Howling to the clouds, the foreign minister resigned as a sacrificial lamb.

Close on the heels of this event, a second

pressures for a Japanese military buildup, somewhat enhanced by these two recent accidents, had heightened political sensitivities in Japan just when the blowups occurred over the word "alliance" and the interpretation of "introduction." Without this unlucky bunching of explosive issues, only a mild reaction might have occurred to any one of them alone.

What is to be learned from this painful incident? The American government must take stock again of the sensitivity of the Japanese about nuclear and defense matters. It should be sure that its words are indeed clear in its handling of nuclear matters with relation to Japan. It would also do well to soft-pedal its requests for a more rapid military buildup and accept a lower posture here as a trade-off for Japanese cooperativeness on economic matters. In addition, it should try to stay clear of controversy over these matters with Japan for the time being and allow the situation there to settle down gradually.

The Japanese government and people have even more to learn. Eventually, they must face frankly the choices before them. Either they can have an American defense alliance, or else they themselves will have to militarize on a massive scale. The paradox of "unarmed neutrality," which seemed so attractive to them in the early post-war years, simply is not a viable option. Since almost no Japanese want full re-militarization, a defense alliance with the United States is actually the only real possibility. This they must admit to themselves if they wish to enjoy the benefits of this alliance, which have been great, not least in aiding Japan's tremendous economic surge forward. If such an alliance is to be effective, it cannot be enlarded by unrealistic restrictions on American naval vessels. I see no need for Japan to aban-

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Rowland Evans  
And Robert Novak

## Mideast Collision Course

JERUSALEM—Arik Sharon, hero of the bloody 1973 war with Egypt, is convinced that Israeli voters are moving toward full acceptance of Prime Minister Menachem Begin's militant settlement policy on the West Bank, a key element in the national security issue that underlies the bitter Israeli political campaign.

If he is right, Begin will continue as prime minister after the June 29 election and set the stage for new confrontations with the United States. Begin's aggressive settlements policy is anathema to Arab states now being courted by the United States for help in halting Soviet aggression in the Persian Gulf region. Thus, it undercuts President Reagan's policy with the Arab states. Many politicians here last week, he told us, are on a collision course.

To reinforce his conviction, retired Gen. Sharon has developed a unique campaign plan. By election day, he told us, some 400,000 voters—at least one-quarter of the expected vote—will have taken the "Sharon trail" from Israel proper to view the new settlements across the green line that separated Israel from Jordan before the 1967 war. Voters ride in state-subsidized buses.

"When they see what we have done," Sharon told us, "they understand there is no other way. I campaign not by kissing babies, or taking flowers, but by showing the settlements."

Planting Jewish settlements on the West Bank has been the great passion of Begin's first four years as Israel's leader. In his speeches, Begin is dominating all aspects of this campaign. He likes to recall how he bested Jimmy Carter on the settlements issue of calls for a cease-fire. He told us with relish how Carter tried and failed to stop the settlements.

Temporarily freed from American pressure, while Reagan develops his Middle East policy, Begin is now rushing to complete housing, roads, electrical lines, water mains and other amenities, and provide the generous financial subsidies needed to entice Israelis into the new settlements. His partner is Sharon, a serious man of large bulk who is perhaps the ablest and surely the most successful member of Begin's Cabinet. Poring over maps that depict Arab towns surrounded and bedged in by Jewish settlements, Sharon told us his polls showed two-thirds of Israel's voters now support Begin's plan—"up 17 percentage points."

But the nasty question left unanswered by Begin and Sharon, and largely ignored in the campaign rhetoric, is this: Is it, in fact, the case that autonomy, much less self-determination, ever work for 1,300,000 Arabs in the West Bank and Gaza if Israeli Jews populate their land?

There is a wide gap between Begin's policy and the far milder settlements policy of the Labor Party headed by Shimon Peres. It makes a contradiction as great as that between Begin's settlements policy and Reagan's strategy to enlist anti-Soviet help from Arab states that insist on self-determination for the Palestinian people.

Peres and his high command warn that if populated parts of the West Bank are not returned to Jordan, the elusive "Jordan option" plan that Peres is pushing, the Palestinians eventually will have to be offered Israeli citizenship or Palestine will be converted into a garnish state. But if the Palestinian Arabs ever do get the vote here, they will soon threaten the Jewish state with an Arab majority. Begin opposes any and all Jordan options.

Old-line Labor leader Abba Eban, slated for foreign minister if Peres wins, told us: "Under Begin's settlements plan, we will either have to give the vote to the Arabs and become a Jewish Lebanon [where the former Christian majority has been submerged by the faster-growing Muslim population] or we do not give them the vote and we are another South Africa."

Because security is always the underlying issue, the debate over the settlements question is a key to future security. Begin's policy is the hottest debating point in the campaign.

In fact, however, the settlements question is a hard case against Begin's policy because to do so would mean running headlong into the pro-settlements fired up by four years of Begin-Sharon success in planning for new settlements.

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